



Invisible Tribe By Sara Miriam Gross

bound to encounter, arranged around the year of Yomim Tovim. A few are based on actual people, but most are fiction. However, as they say, “There’s a lot of falsehood in non-fiction (think: election news) and a lot of truth in fiction.” The stories ring true.

Losing a parent at a young age is a life-altering trauma. We, as a community, have to do everything we can to make sure this ‘invisible tribe’ feels loved and supported, yet not pitied. This reviewer is familiar with a woman who lost her mother at age three during the Great Depression. After a few years in an orphanage, she was allowed to come back home when her oldest sister was twelve and legally able to care for her along with her father. However, lacking extended family, therapy, and anything like Links Family — founded by Sarah Rivkah Kohn, the premier organization in our community that addresses the issues that these children experience and for whose newsletters these stories were originally written — my friend grew up capable and successful in so many ways, yet extremely emotionally handicapped.

It doesn’t have to be like that! One significant form of support that appears in these

stories is help from volunteers in the community, such as a “big brother” (Brothers – Big and Bigger) or a neighbor who takes the place of a father at Avos U’Banim (Pinny’s Purim). Very often, loving grandparents and aunts play a huge role in raising the yesomim, and the author deals honestly with complications that can arise. There are stories about children having to face sharing their loss with their friends (Shleping Secrets), and older siblings helping younger ones to adjust (Shopping Tripped). Therapy is also mentioned, although other options take a front seat. All in all, the book encourages openness, acceptance, and warmth, and encourages children to live with simchah.

In her introduction, the author shares that she experienced the loss of her father in first grade. Even if the readers weren’t told directly, her intuitive writing makes it more than obvious. The characters are multi-dimensional, with emotional depth. Readers will find themselves

shedding tears — and laughing aloud — as each boy or girl comes face to face with their loss, their feelings, and grows through them.

With letters of approbation from Rabbi Shimon Russell L.C.S.W. and Rabbi Yitzchak Breitowitz of Yerushalayim, Rabbi Dovid Goldwasser of Brooklyn, Sarah Rivkah Kohn, and Jennifer Esther Kotler, founder of Ohr Ha-dassah — an Israeli organization that helps widows and orphans, this book will be treasured by the population it features. Yet its readers should not be limited to only members of the “invisible tribe.” It is a book that can teach all children and adults to be compassionate and understanding to those around them whose circumstances may be more challenging than their own.

“Invisible Tribe” will be available in the United States beginning this November. Look for it in your favorite Jewish bookstore, or order online at Menucha Publishers.

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Reviewed by Monsey Mevaser Staff

Children are faced with daily challenges, but most are lucky enough to have two parents who can help them navigate from childhood through adulthood. There exists, however, an “invisible tribe” of children who have lost either their father or mother and are faced with a different set of circumstances than the child growing up in a “typical” nuclear family. While children from divorced homes also experience home life that isn’t that picture perfect “Tatty-making-kid-dush-and-Mommy-baking-challos” scenes that fill our children’s literature, the pain of losing of a parent compounds the child’s nisayon.

This book contains 42 stories that deal with circumstances that bereaved children are

200 Gather at PTI Young Professionals Event With Sponsors Around The World

The Young Professionals Program of Pas-saic Torah Institute (Yeshiva Ner Boruch-PTI) took a dramatic expansion in the New Year. 200 young professional men and career mentors in many fields were matched in a giant learning event for an inspiring start to a new year and a new future. The event attracted dozens of cosponsors across the NJ-NY area and even Israel.

“The whole community and many organizations and businesses came together to give the next generation a jump start on their careers and spiritual growth,” says Rabbi Baruch Bodenheim, Associate Rosh Yeshiva of PTI, “just in time for the New Year.”

Young professionals feasted upon a gala dinner and kickstarted career conversations with leading mentors in their fields. The highlight of the program was a giant learning session of matched pairs and small groups with their respective career mentors. The learning was facilitated with give and take by the dynamic speaker Harry Rothenberg of the Rothenberg Law Firm. Harry also related his own experiences at Ohr Somayach, before graduating from Harvard Law School.

The NJ Jewish Link, The Jewish Standard, NJ Jewish News, The Network, The Jewish Local Pages, Monsey Mevaser, and The Jewish Voice & Opinion were media sponsors of the event, and were joined by cosponsors Touro University, RnR Properties, Rothenberg Law

Firm, Guaranteed Rate, Barry Stein Accounting, Brownstone Abstract Title Insurance, Perlow Law, Cork & Barrel, Torah Links, Torah Links Fellowship, Aish Hatorah, Olami-Mentorships, Project Inspire, Rutgers Meor JX, Shapell’s Yeshiva/Midreshet Rachel V’Chaya, NCSY, Chazaq, Mesorah Young Professional Singles, and Manhattan Jewish Experience.

The evening was uplifted with dancing to the ecstatic music of R’ Moshe Auslander & Chacham Isaac Jamal.

PTI announced plans to raise funds this year to double the number of Young Professionals in the program. It will expand the schedule to a full week from its current 3 day schedule on Sunday mornings, and Monday and Thursday evenings. Finally, it will allow PTI to hire another full time rabbi, in addition to its current 20 faculty and kollel fellows who teach and learn one on one.

“It was so inspiring, just awesome,” according to Ben Rand, coordinator of the Young Professionals Program. “Our first year has grown so fast in the wake of Oct. 7th, so many people came here looking for a deeper understanding of their Judaism.”

PTI has 5 levels of classes for men and women, from the complete beginner with no background to the most advanced kollel scholar, 7 days and evenings a week.

For info and to register contact PTIyoungprofessionals@gmail.com, ptishulcloud.com

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